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THE THREE QUEENS.

I.

Musing, in a land deserted,
 'Mid a darkness falling fast,
 Where the fruits and flowers are withered,
 Sits alone, the dying Past.
 She, the queen of lost dominions,
 Seated on her gloomy throne,
 Coldly feels her stiffening heart-strings
 Slowly changing into stone.
 Days and months, and years, and ages
 Rest as jewels on her brow,
 But their lustre shines but dimly
 Mid the deepening darkness now.
 Sadly silent, on her bosom
 Droops in grief her weary head;
 Blindly gazing on the foot-prints
 Left about her by the dead;
 Dreaming of the lost departed,
 And the things of yesterday;
 Little cares she, as the Present
 Takes her choicest gems away.

II.

In a castle built by fairies
 High amid the realms of air,
 Dwells the Future, rich in promise,
 Queen of Hope and sunshine there.
 Favored by a friendly Fortune,
 Seated on an ivory throne,
 Free to wield a golden sceptre,
 She is monarch there alone.
 Clothed in rosy hues and purple,
 Decked with gems of purest ray,
 Fairest mid fair Fancy's daughters,
 Gayly pass the Hours away.
 But behind the throne recumbent,
 Dwelleth Doubt, in sombre guise,
 And amid the revels often,
 Dark and grim his features rise.
 Frightened at his sad forebodings,
 Fickle Future floats along,
 Leaving to our longing senses
 Echoes—of a Syren's song.

III.

But among us dwells the Present,
 Queen of real life, and truth,
 Rich in means for action noblest,
 Willing bride of earnest Youth.
 Light celestial from the zenith,
 Flashes on her arching brow,
 Where the diamond moments sparkle,
 Set amid the golden Now.
 And her hands are ever ready,
 As her strength is ever new,
 Doing what she feels is duty,
 Only glorying in the True.
 Faith and Joy, and Love in earnest,
 Standing near her jeweled throne,
 Guard with care the orange blossoms.
 Wreathed about her virgin zone.

But for *thee*, these wreaths are woven,
 Take, and bind them round thy head—
 Dreamer, there may *still* be in thee
 Heart, this Queen to win and wed.

R. G. PERKINS.

THE SEA-SHORE.

I.

Two lovers, in a golden dream,
 Stand listening to the sea;
 Just where the air from Ocean's breast
 Is lost upon the lea.
 The light from off the flashing wave
 Falls sparkling at their feet;
 The waters leave their kisses there,
 Then lingeringly retreat—
 They bring a thousand smiles, to one
 Within whose glorious eyes,
 A brighter beam than wavelets bear,
 In lustrous beauty lies.

II.

The sameness of the Ocean's voice,
 Unchanging in its tone,
 Reveals a steady constancy,
 Which emulates their own.
 The heavy surges rising strong,
 As rushing by they roll,
 Are like the passions heaving high
 Within the lovers' soul.
 And as the shore with tranquil smile
 The heaving surge restrains,
 So she o'er him with holy look
 Her sweet control maintains.

III.

Her soul steals softly through her eyes
 And enters his—a Queen:
 She brings her jewels in her heart,
 Where his has ever been.
 There's little need of spoken words
 Where all is understood,
 And vainly they must try to speak
 The loving words they would.
 They *feel* they love, and through their souls
 Now blended into one,
 There breathes the thought that now at last
 Existence has begun.

IV.

The years may pass, but still the sound
 Of Ocean uttered here,
 Shall shed sweet influence o'er the hearts
 Of lovers wandering near.
 And many a vow shall whispered be
 Along this pleasant shore,
 When they who lingered here but now,
 Shall come again no more;
 But never shall the sounding sea,
 Its sympathy convey,
 To purer love, than it has here
 Interpreted to-day.

R. G. PERKINS.